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DGCA revises flight crew work hours to beat fatigue

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BUSINESS

Zee-Sony's $10-billion merger may be called off

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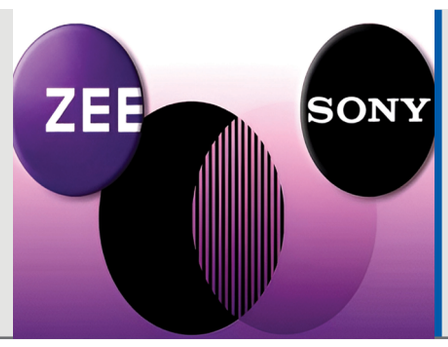

SPORTS

Heinrich Klaasen announces Test retirement

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SC sends Bilkis' 11 rapists back to jail

SC says Gujarat govt had abused its power and did not have any authority to pass remission

NEW DELHI/DAHOD, 8 JAN

Holding that a "complicit" Gujarat government had abused its power, the Supreme Court on Monday overturned the remission given to 11 men convicted of raping Bilkis Bano and murdering seven members of her family during the 2002 riots and ordered that they be sent back to jail within two weeks.

"We strike down the remission orders on the ground of usurpation of power by Gujarat government," a bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan said in a massive win for Bilkis Bano whose relatives celebrated with firecrackers in their hometown Devgadh Baria in Gujarat's Dahod district.

In its 251-page judgment on the case that has long horrified the country with its details, the apex court said the remission order was without application of mind and asked whether "heinous crimes against women permit remission" whatever faith she may follow or creed she may belong to.

The much-anticipated ruling, which extensively quoted Greek philosopher Plato, was welcomed by several political leaders, including West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Congress' Rahul Gandhi and AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi.

Bilkis Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was raped while fleeing the riots that broke out after the Godhra train burning incident in February 2002. Her three-year-old daughter was among those killed.

All 11 convicts were granted remission by the Gujarat government and released on August 15, 2022.

Supreme Court said the Gujarat government was not the appropriate government to pass the remission order. It clarified that the state in which an offender is tried and sentenced is competent to decide the remission plea of convicts. The convicts were tried in Maharashtra.

"Rule of law is breached because the Gujarat government usurped power not vested in it and abused its power. On that ground also, the remission orders deserve to be quashed," the bench said.

The top court nullified its May 2022 order of another bench asking the Gujarat government to consider a remission plea of one of the convicts as the order was obtained by "playing fraud on the court" and by suppressing material facts.

The top court also held that the PIL contesting the remission filed by Bilkis Bano under Article 32 of the Constitution was maintainable. According to Article 32, "It is a fundamental right, which states that individuals have the right to approach the Supreme Court (SC) seeking enforcement of other fundamental rights recognised by the Constitution." While reserving the judgement, the apex court had directed the Centre and the Gujarat government to submit by October 16 the original records related to the remission of sentence of the 11 convicts. Besides the petition filed by Bilkis Bano, several other PILs, including one by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, independent journalist Revati Laul and former vice-chancellor of Lucknow University Roop Rekha Verma and another by TMC leader Mahua Moitra, challenged the remission of the convicts and their premature release from jail.

—PTI

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Bilkis Bano, who was gang-raped during the 2002 riots in Gujarat, at her residence *PHOTO: PTI*

This is what justice feels like: Bilkis

This is what justice feels like, Bilkis Bano said. In a statement issued through her lawyer Shobha Gupta, Bano thanked the top court for the verdict and said "today is truly the New Year for me". "I have wept tears of relief. I have smiled for the first time in over a year and half. I have hugged my children. It feels like a stone the size of a mountain has been lifted from my chest, and I can breathe again," Bano said. "I thank Supreme Court for giving me, my children and women this vindication and hope in the promise of equal justice for all," Bano said.

Shivamogga girl dies due to monkey fever

SHIVAMOGGA, 8 JAN

An 18-year-old girl in Shivamogga died due to the monkey disease on Monday. This marked the year's first death due to monkey disease. The deceased was suffering from a cold and fever and was treated for three days at Megan Hospital. She was shifted to Manipal KMC Hospital for better treatment. At least 2,911 tests have been conducted, and two of them were found positive. Monkey fever is also called Kyasanur Forest Disease. According to a Shivamogga health official, the girl was also suffering from anaemia and due to the failure of treatment, the girl passed away on Monday evening. *—Salar News*

Modi, UAE President to lead roadshow on 9 Jan in Gujarat

AHMEDABAD, 8 JAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan will lead a road show on Tuesday from outside the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport here a day ahead of the inauguration of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, officials said.The 3-km-long roadshow will start in the evening after the PM receives the UAE President at the airport, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic-East), Ahmedabad city, Safin Hasan."The roadshow will culminate at Indira Bridge, which connects Ahmedabad with Gandhinagar. *—PTI*

'Modi Gallery' to open soon, biennale exhibitions till 31 Mar

NEW DELHI, 8 JAN

Seven thematic exhibitions in the Red Fort complex till March end and the upcoming inauguration of the 'Modi Gallery' here are among the key events that would keep the culture calendar buzzing in 2024. Officials said while the India biennale at the Red Fort is over, the exhibition will continue to be on display till 31 March, for which seven thematic pavilions have been set up in three British-era barracks, transforming former military garrisons into vibrant cultural spaces. From ornate doors to magnificent ancient temples and from heritage stepwells to rich textile designs, the art and architectural legacy of India has been showcased at the biennale. *—PTI*

NAMMA DRIPPY CITY

Monday dawned in Bengaluru with a gentle drizzle, heralding the City's first rain of the year amid fog. With temperatures dancing between a cozy 17°C to a balmy 28°C, the City is set for a week of gentle showers, according to IMD *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

ED ACCUSES WB COPS OF DILUTING MOB ATTACK CASE

KOLKATA, 8 JAN

The row over the attacks on ED teams in West Bengal escalated on Monday with the federal agency saying that the state police registered an FIR only under bailable sections in the 5 January Sandeshkhali incident, while no details were given to it in the Bongaon assault case.

The ED also claimed that the magnitude of the PDS "scam" which it was investigating was "enormous" and proceeds of crime transferred by a suspect amount to Rs 9,000-10,000 crore, out of which Rs 2,000 crore are "suspected to be transferred to Dubai either directly or through Bangladesh".

The money laundering investigation of the agency pertains to alleged irregularities in the public distribution system (PDS) *—PTI*

India summons Maldivian envoy over mins' dig at Modi

NEW DELHI, 8 JAN

The Maldivian envoy to India was on Monday summoned to the external affairs ministry and conveyed its strong concerns over disparaging social media posts against Prime Minister Narendra Modi by three now-suspended-ministers as the backlash over the remarks continued for the second day.

In Male, the Maldivian government conveyed to Indian High Commissioner Munu Muhawar that the remarks against Modi do not represent its views. Deputy ministers in the youth ministry Malsha Shareef, Mariyam Shiuna and Abdulla Mahzoom Majid were suspended on Sunday by the government of President Mohamed Muizzu over their posts.

The Maldivian President is in China on a week-long trip. Though Maldivian media reported that Muhawar was summoned to the foreign ministry, the Indian high commission said he had a "pre-arranged" meeting with Ambassador at Large Dr Ali Naseer Mohamed.

In New Delhi, sources said Maldivian envoy Ibrahim Shaheeb was summoned to the external affairs ministry and was conveyed its strong concerns over the social media posts against Modi.

As the row escalated, India's leading travel platform EaseMyTrip said it has suspended bookings to the Maldives. The three deputy ministers used disparaging comments against Modi for his post on 'X' following his visit to Lakshadweep, inferring that it was an attempt to project the Union Territory as an alternative tourist destination to the Maldives.

Narendra Modi *PHOTO: PTI*

Vistara to monitor demand for flights

Amid the India-Maldives row, full service carrier Vistara on Monday said it will monitor the demand for flights between the two countries as the "situation is evolving right now". Vistara operates one flight each daily from Mumbai and Delhi to Male. Airline's Chief Commercial Officer Deepak Rajawat said it has not cancelled anything as of now. *—PTI*

HC bans mining activity around KRS dam

BENGALURU, 8 JAN

Expressing concern over the mining blasts affecting the Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) dam in Srirangapatna, Mandya, the High Court of Karnataka on Monday imposed a ban on mining and blasting activities within a 20-km radius of the structure.

The ban issued on Monday will be in force till the Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research, Dhanbad, conducts a dam safety survey. However, the HC has not fixed any deadline for the study to be undertaken under the Dam Safety Act, 2022. The HC had earlier made the State Committee on Dam Safety (SCDS) a party to the petition.

PHOTO: PTI

The division bench of Chief Justice Prasanna B Varale and Justice Krishna S Dixit were hearing a petition filed by one CG Kumar who had challenged the deputy commissioner's order that conversion of land for stone quarrying would be granted only after a trial blast was conducted by the Cauvery Neeravari Nigama Limited. Kumar had challenged this condition as being illegal.

The petition was however converted to public interest litigation (PIL) by the HC considering the seriousness of the issue and the concerns over damage to the KRS Dam posed by mining activities surround it. *—PTI*

Manipur scribe held over report

IMPHAL, 8 JAN

The editor of a vernacular newspaper in Manipur, who was arrested for allegedly publishing sensitive details in a report, has been released on bail, an official said on Monday.

He was arrested on Friday and granted bail by a local court on Sunday, he said. "The editor, Dhanabir Maibam, had published sensitive details in a news report," the government official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said.

Maibam was remanded to police custody till Sunday. He was booked under various sections of the Official Secrets Act, including ones that entail punishment for "promoting enmity on the ground of religion and race", the official said.

Sources said the report in 'Huyen Lanpao' highlighted some "developing incidents" at Moreh, which has witnessed a surge in gunfights between state forces and suspected Kuki militants. Earlier, on 28 December, another editor of a vernacular daily was arrested on similar grounds and later released on bail. Congress, in a statement on Sunday, had condemned the arrest of the two editors and demanded their immediate release. "Indian National Congress strongly deplores the arrest of the editors of reputable vernacular newspapers," Pawan Khera said. *—PTI*

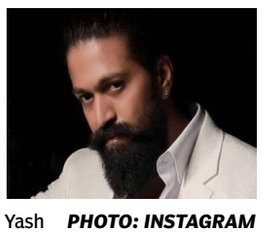
3 ELECTROCUTED WHILE PUTTING UP POSTERS OF ACTOR YASH ON B'DAY

GADAG, 8 JAN

Three people were killed and three sustained serious injuries while erecting a huge cut-out of superstar Yash to wish him for his birthday at Soranagi village near Lakshmeshwar town in Gadag district on Monday.

After visiting the victims' families, Yash said he felt ashamed after the incident. "I request everyone to not put up banners and instead show love towards me by doing good things in life," the actor said.

The deceased are Hanumantha Harijan, 24, Murali Nadumani, 20, and Naveen Gaji 20. Manjunath Harijan, Prakash Myageri and Deepak Harijan sustained serious injuries and were hospitalised.



Yash *PHOTO: INSTAGRAM*

On Monday, the group of 9 youths were setting up the cut-out to express their love for the 'KGF' Series superstar Yash on his birthday, SP BS Nemagoud said. As there was no light in the area, the victims were unable to see the high-tension electric wire and got electrocuted.

State government has announced Rs 2 lakh compensation for the family members of the deceased. *—Salar News*

FIRST FROM KARNATAKA

B'luru trans woman enters Sabarimala

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, 8 JAN

Riyana Raju has created history by becoming the first transwoman from Karnataka to visit Sabarimala Sree Ayyappan Temple in Kerala by wearing a saree and not hiding her identity.

Despite a Supreme Court ruling allowing women devotees into the temple, women between the ages of 10 and 50 years have been blocked repeatedly by people. However, transgender women are allowed entry into the temple if they show documents and medical test reports that they are not menstruating. To counter this, transgender women usually dress as men in order to gain easy access.

Riyana, who is General Secretary of Karnataka Youth Congress, braved the odds to enter the hilltop shrine on Friday (5 January). The activist told Salar News that despite having letters from Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister, the entry was not easy for her. "My Aadhaar card says I am a female and the security forces were not ready to let me in. Women and Children Department officials and activists told the security personnel to let me in. After I showed the transgender card, I was allowed inside. Cops asked me a lot of questions about my sexuality," the Bengaluru resident said. Riyana raised concerns about the absence of sensitivity among the police forces in the temple. "A male police constable usually checks a trans woman, who has undergone her sex change operation. It is uncomfortable to have a man touch our breasts and other private parts. I wanted to break this system. Hence, I carried all the documents from Central government and reports of medical exams and told my community that I would not go after undergoing a check-up. "

The activist said men at the temple were shocked to see her. "Devotees questioned if I am menstruating or if I have a uterus. I had to explain myself. We respect the cultural beliefs and respect the decision to allow only non-menstruators to enter the temple. A lot of people from the transwomen community go to the temple in men's clothing to avoid arguments," Riyana said. *—Salar News*

Riyana, who is General Secretary of Karnataka Youth Congress, braved the odds to enter the hilltop shrine on Friday *PHOTO: FACEBOOK*

'Oppenheimer' shines at Golden Globes

BEVERLY HILLS, 8 JAN

Christopher Nolan's blockbuster biopic "Oppenheimer" dominated the 81st Golden Globes, winning five awards including best drama, while Yorgos Lanthimos' Frankenstein riff "Poor Things" pulled off an upset victory over "Barbie" to triumph in the best comedy or musical category.

If awards season has been building toward a second match-up of Barbenheimer, this round went to "Oppenheimer." The film also won best director for Nolan, best drama actor for Cillian Murphy, best supporting actor for Robert Downey Jr. and for Ludwig Goransson's score. Along with best comedy or musical, "Poor Things" also won for Emma Stone's performance as Bella *—PTI*

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Cillian Murphy and Robert Downey Jr at the 81st Golden Globe Awards on Sundayat the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California *PHOTO: APX*